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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- LL152 and LL142 Updates
- MPC Spotlight:
Rathe Associates
- High-Efficiency Boilers
in New York City
- Ladder and Scaffold:
Safety and Best Practices
- AND MORE!

Tuesday, April 14th, 2026
6:00 – 8:00 PM
Vetro Restaurant & Lounge
Howard Beach, NY 11414

Read More inside on Page 4!



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*The Voice of the Licensed Master Plumber,
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the first 2026 issue of The Voice! As we begin 2026, I want to take a moment to reflect on where we are and, more importantly, where we are headed together. The year ahead presents exciting opportunities for the MPC as we continue to strengthen our role as an advocate and resource for our members. Building on the momentum of recent successes, our focus remains on delivering meaningful value through education, engagement, and industry representation.

Education continues to be a key priority in 2026. We are taking the next steps toward becoming a New York City accredited course provider. This will be a significant milestone for the Master Plumbers Council, and reflects our commitment to delivering high-quality, relevant training that meets recognized standards by the Department of Buildings. We aim to provide a better learning experience and help ensure our members are well prepared for the evolving requirements of the industry.

Local Law 142 is now officially in effect. This City Council-enacted law updates important portions of the NYC Administrative Code related to building safety and plumbing work. These changes aim to strengthen safety, oversight, and compliance in plumbing and gas system practices across the city's buildings.

At our February Membership Meeting, representatives from the NYC Department of Buildings delivered an excellent and informative presentation covering LL152 and key boiler-related topics. They also took the time to address the many questions submitted by our members. The session provided valuable clarity and practical insight and was well received by all in attendance. Thank you to the NYC Department of Buildings representatives who joined us and contributed to such a productive and engaging discussion.

We are also pleased to announce our upcoming 10th Annual Affiliate Appreciation Night. This event is our way of recognizing and thanking our affiliate members for their continued support of the Master Plumbers Council. Affiliate Appreciation Night is open to all MPC affiliate members, and we encourage everyone to register, and celebrate this milestone together. Please be sure to register in advance to secure your place.

Our Next Generation Events continue to gain strong traction and expand in popularity. With increased member engagement and positive feedback, even more events have been added to the 2026 calendar. These sessions are quickly becoming must-attend events, offering engaging, hands-on presentations that attendees consistently find practical and insightful. The continued success of the Next Generation series reflects our commitment to delivering meaningful, relevant experiences that support the future of our industry.

Together we can make our industry better.

Daniel Vessio
President
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Members are encouraged to bring key employees to this event. All are welcome, and all attendees must be registered to attend.

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HIGH-EFFICIENCY BOILERS IN NEW YORK CITY

Life Expectancy, Safety, Maintenance, and Replacement Timing in a Changing Regulatory Landscape

By Wallace Eannace

Adam M. Hersh, Vice President

New York City's building stock is among the oldest and most complex in the United States and nowhere is that more evident than in boiler rooms. More than 55 percent of the city's multifamily buildings were constructed before 1940, with many dating back to the early 20th century. Mechanical rooms in these buildings have often evolved incrementally, with limited documentation and decades of layered system modifications.



For plumbing and HVAC contractors, this aging infrastructure now collides with an increasingly demanding regulatory environment. Local Law 97 imposes enforceable greenhouse gas emissions limits on large buildings, while Local Law 154 restricts on-site fossil fuel combustion in most new construction. Beginning in October 2026, a new U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) commercial water heater efficiency standard adds another critical pressure point, fundamentally changing how domestic hot water systems are specified, vented, and replaced.

Together, these regulations are reshaping how boiler and water heating systems are selected, installed, maintained, and ultimately retired.

Aging Buildings, Modern Equipment

Older New York City buildings frequently present conditions that challenge modern high-efficiency equipment, including legacy steam or high-temperature hydronic distribution, oversized radiation, limited mechanical room access, corroded piping, high mineral content make-up water, and incomplete as-built documentation.

High-efficiency condensing boilers and water heaters are engineered for clean systems, controlled flow, and precise combustion. When installed into environments never designed for condensing operation, system design, piping strategy, and commissioning become as important as the equipment itself.

This reality has made technical representation and system-level support essential. Wallace Eannace works with NYC contractors to evaluate existing conditions and develop building-specific solutions rather than generic boiler or water heater replacements.

Life Expectancy in Real-World NYC Conditions

Traditional commercial boilers are often cited as having a 20- to 25-year service life. In practice, condensing equipment installed in demanding retrofit environments typically experiences shorter lifespans.



Premature failure in New York City is most often tied to poor water quality, inadequate dirt separation, improper piping arrangements, condensate mismanagement, oversizing, excessive cycling, and combustion that is never re-verified after start-up.

As the DOE's 2026 efficiency standard phases out most non-condensing commercial water heaters, these same factors increasingly determine not only equipment longevity, but code compliance.

The Impact of the 2026 DOE Water Heating Standard
 Effective October 2026, the DOE will require significantly higher minimum efficiencies for commercial water heaters. For many categories, this effectively eliminates the manufacture of non-condensing equipment.

In New York City, the impact is amplified by space constraints, limited venting pathways, and continuous domestic hot water demand. Many buildings will no longer be able to replace water heaters on a one-for-one basis. Contractors will increasingly need to evaluate boiler-based domestic hot water generation, indirect water heaters, or integrated plant upgrades to remain compliant. Utilizing a commercial non-condensing boiler solely for domestic water heating generation is not permissible under the new 2026 DOE water heating standards.

Wallace Eannace supports contractors through this transition by assisting with system selection, venting strategies, and code-compliant domestic hot water designs that align with both DOE 2026 requirements and Local Law 97 emissions targets.

Designing for Performance and Compliance

High-efficiency boilers and condensing water heating systems are unforgiving of poor piping design. Incorrect hydraulic separation, insufficient flow, or generic piping layouts can quickly erode efficiency, shorten equipment life, and create service issues.

Wallace Eannace provides building-specific piping diagrams developed for actual job conditions, accounting for:

- Existing distribution systems
- Domestic hot water priority loads
- High-rise pressure and expansion requirements
- Steam-to-hydronic conversions
- DOE 2026 efficiency compliance
- Electrification or hybrid strategies

These project-specific designs reduce installation risk, improve serviceability, and allow equipment to operate within manufacturer specifications from day one.

Start-Up, Commissioning, and Safety

Carbon monoxide exposure remains one of the most serious risks associated with fuel-burning equipment. Dense occupancy, aging venting infrastructure, and higher-efficiency combustion increase contractor responsibility and liability.

Modern boiler safeties do not replace commissioning.

Wallace Eannace routinely provides on-site start-up and commissioning support, working alongside contractors to:

- Verify combustion across the full firing range
- Confirm proper venting and combustion air pathways
- Validate gas pressure and burner setup
- Confirm control sequences and safety operation
- Establish baseline performance documentation

As DOE-compliant systems introduce higher condensation rates and tighter operating tolerances, disciplined commissioning is essential to safety, reliability, and warranty protection.

Maintenance, Monitoring, and Warranty Support

While manufacturers publish detailed maintenance schedules, many systems in the field receive only minimal annual service. Under Local Law 97 and the DOE 2026 standard, inadequate maintenance no longer just affects efficiency. It creates compliance, safety, and liability exposure.

Effective maintenance programs should include documented combustion analysis, heat exchanger inspection, condensate management, fault history review, and control verification.

Wallace Eannace supports contractors and building owners with remote monitoring solutions that provide ongoing visibility into system performance, fault conditions, and runtime data. These tools allow issues to be identified early, reducing emergency calls, improving uptime, and supporting emissions-reduction strategies tied to LL97 compliance.

In addition, Wallace Eannace provides local warranty repair and technical support, helping contractors resolve issues quickly without long delays or finger-pointing between manufacturers and installers.

Replacement Timing Beyond Age

In New York City, boiler and water heater replacement decisions are no longer driven by mechanical failure alone. For many buildings, the compliance life of equipment ends before its physical life.

Replacement triggers now commonly include repeated lockouts, escalating repair costs, inability to meet LL97 emissions targets, non-compliance with DOE 2026 water heating standards, venting deficiencies, and incompatibility with future electrification strategies.



High-efficiency boilers remain a viable solution when properly applied and supported and often enable compliant domestic hot water generation as non-condensing equipment is phased out.

Conclusion

High-efficiency boilers continue to play a critical role in New York City's existing building stock. Their success, however, depends on treating boiler rooms as integrated systems rather than isolated pieces of equipment.

Contractors who prioritize accurate design, building-specific piping, disciplined commissioning, documented maintenance, performance monitoring, and reliable warranty support will be best positioned to deliver safe, compliant, and durable systems in the era of Local Laws 97 and 154 and the 2026 DOE water heating standard.

Many of these principles are outlined in the Wallace Eannace System Solution Guidebook, which frames compliance, electrification readiness, and lifecycle system performance as the defining challenges of the next decade for plumbing and HVAC professionals in the New York metro market.

In New York City, the future belongs to contractors who design for performance, compliance, and longevity, and who partner with organizations equipped to support those systems over their full lifecycle.

About Wallace Eannace

Founded in 1924, Wallace Eannace is an engineering-driven manufacturers' representative serving the New York and New Jersey metropolitan market for more than a century. The firm specializes in commercial heating, hydronic, and domestic hot water systems and works closely with plumbing and HVAC contractors, consulting engineers, developers, and building owners on system design, code compliance, commissioning, and long-term performance.

Wallace Eannace provides comprehensive project support including building-specific system design and piping diagrams, equipment selection, on-site start-up and commissioning, remote system monitoring, and local warranty and technical support. The firm's leadership team brings decades of hands-on experience navigating the unique challenges of New York City's aging building stock and evolving regulatory environment, including Local Laws 97 and 154 and the upcoming 2026 DOE commercial water heating standards.

Wallace Eannace partners with contractors to deliver engineered systems that work, comply, and last in one of the most demanding building markets in the country.

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Ladder and Scaffold: Safety and Best Practices

As injury claims continue to grow in both quantity and size of payments, it is more important than ever for contractors to maintain safe jobsites. This is most crucial when dealing with action over, or labor law, claims.

Labor Law 240, or the “Scaffold Law”, is a New York only law that is in place to help prevent gravity related claims. The law imposes absolute and strict liability on the property owner and general contractor if a worker falls from height or is struck by an object from height. Unlike most personal injury claims, there is no comparative negligence. This means that the worker can never be at fault for the injury occurring. Even if a worker were to disregard standard job safety protocols, such as wearing provided PPE or being under the influence while at work, the contractor and property owner are still liable.

While these claims have become an epidemic in New York City construction, contractors can still minimize the potential for LL240 claims through strong and robust jobsite safety measures.

Equipment and PPE

Having the proper equipment and PPE for your workers is a useful step in preventing gravity rated incidents. Many contractors have instilled a “Ladders Last” program, which mandates using ladders as a last resort for working at heights. Rather than using a ladder, these programs will prioritize safer alternatives, such as scaffolds or scissor lifts. When ladders are deemed to be the only option, strict inspection and usage protocols are enforced. Both the ladders and the alternative elevated work platforms must be inspected regularly to ensure the workers’ safety.

Workers must also be fitted with the proper, OSHA compliant, PPE to prevent claims. All workers should be equipped with hardhats, safety glasses, gloves and sturdy work boots when on an active jobsite. When working from heights, workers should also be equipped with proper fall protection. These fall protections include guardrails, toe boards, personal fall arrest and restraint systems and safety nets, if necessary. The restraint system should include a full body harness with a lifeline, lanyard and deceleration device.

Regular inspections should be performed to ensure all equipment and PPE are compliant with OSHA standards. These inspections should all be documented and saved as well.

Proper Employee Training

Perhaps the most effective way to prevent gravity-related claims is to ensure all of your field workers and mechanics receive training in safety and fall protection. All workers should be trained in how to properly use the PPE you have provided. Employees should also be trained in how to safely use a ladder when it is necessary. These methods include how to inspect the ladder before usage and maintaining 3 points of contact. Many contractors will hold multiple safety training sessions a year, with mandatory attendance for all field workers. These training methods should be documented in your safety manual in detail. Separate documentation showing that your employees have been trained in these safety protocols should be maintained as well.

While gravity-related claims are becoming more prevalent than ever, equipping your employees with proper PPE, while also training them in how to safely and correctly use their equipment, can help contractors prevent these claims from ever happening.

For additional information, contact Pat Williams, Vice President at USI Insurance Services, at Patrick.williams@usi.com or (516) 589-4176.



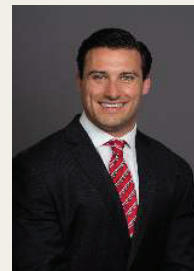
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SPOTLIGHT: JAMES RATHE

If you ask James Rathe what he does for a living, he'll probably joke that he's "just living the dream." That sense of humor and down-to-earth attitude runs through everything he does. After nearly two decades in the family business, James still finds genuine satisfaction in helping people solve problems - especially the kind that involve wires, valves, and the potential to ruin someone's afternoon if not fixed fast.

James's official title is contractor support at his family's business, Rathe Associates, but that barely scratches the surface. He designs and builds radiant heating and snow melt systems, handles everything from residential heating to light and medium commercial jobs, and is the go-to for contractors who need solutions built to spec. The requests come in all shapes and sizes: sometimes there are specific plans, sometimes just a rough idea. Either way, James puts together the design, the quote, and, more often than not, a little peace of mind.

He didn't always plan to follow in the family footsteps. He hoped to be a history teacher, but life chose a different path for him. When graduate school started to feel like a struggle and his dad needed help, James found himself in the warehouse of the family business, then out on the road as an outside salesman, and eventually in his current role as a "problem-solver-in-chief."

"My grandfather started this business almost sixty years ago," James explains. "His father was a mechanical contractor too, so I guess it's always been in the bloodline." Now, with seventeen years under his belt, he's part of a true multi-generational story - one that includes not just his father, Don, but his brothers Matt and Greg as well.

Early in his career, James recalls, he often felt out of his depth. He called his father, Ken, or manufacturers constantly, double-checking everything. But he stuck with it and learned from his mistakes. "When you embrace failure, you can grow and be better," he says. It's a lesson he wishes he'd learned sooner, but one he now passes along freely.

James's inspirations are close to home: his grandfather Roy, his father Don, and their company trainer, Ken Resnick. Ken, especially, helped him accelerate his understanding of the industry, serving as a mentor and friend. "He made understanding the industry a lot easier," James says, and their relationship - like many of James's best stories - grew over long walks and shared challenges.

What stands out about James isn't just his technical expertise or his knack for translating complex problems into plain English. It's the way he measures success: by trust. "One of my favorite things is helping people when they're frustrated, being able to explain things so they understand, and making their job easier," he says. It's a

philosophy he borrowed and adapted from Jesse Cole, the owner of the Savannah Bananas baseball team, who talks about putting “fans first.” For James, it’s “contractors first” - removing friction, earning trust, and making sure no one feels stranded when they need his help.

Some of his proudest moments are his first radiant and snow melt job because it let him see theory turn into reality. He is also especially proud of the redesign of Wantagh Firehouse Stations 1 and 5 which stand out in his mind as genuinely life-saving. “Knowing the fire department has one less thing to worry about - it’s a nice little feather in my cap,” he admits. He also points to the massive modernization of 52 Vanderbilt, a 100-year-old Midtown Manhattan building that he highlights not just for its scale, but for the collaboration it required. James is quick to credit his colleagues, Rich Smith at IMP Plumbing and Heating, Marcel Avril, and Franco Arbodela, who all worked together to design systems for the building that are efficient and future-proof.

James works well with others but, as everyone knows, working with family is its own kind of balancing act. Luckily, James’s father isn’t a micromanager, and while he sees him every day, they give each other space - with separate desks at opposite ends of the building. His brothers have their own roles: Matt handles technical calls; Greg deals with engineers. “I’ve heard horror stories about family businesses,” James says. “I’m lucky. We have disagreements, but nothing that breaks us.”

James’s commitment to relationships and sharing knowledge is what led him to get involved with the MPC. He values the partnership and sense of community that comes with being a member. “Rathe Associates is a strong believer in MPC. We believe that they are not just a valuable customer, but we are a partnership when it comes to helping the city of New York grow in the hydronic and plumbing world,” he says. For James, it’s another way to learn from others in the industry, share what he knows, and help strengthen the profession as a whole.

Outside work, James enjoys long walks at Jones Beach, golfing in the summer, and catching hockey games in the winter. He’s a dedicated fan of the Savannah Bananas (finally seeing them at Yankee Stadium was a life highlight), and he and his brother have made a hobby out of touring baseball and football stadiums across the country - a tradition marked by plenty of bobbleheads and lifelong memories.

If there’s a thread running through James’s story, it’s that relationships matter. Whether with family, colleagues, or customers, the trust he builds is his real legacy. In an industry shaped by constant change - new regulations and new technologies - some things remain essential: honest advice, clear communication, and a willingness to learn. That’s what James delivers every day - and it’s what has made him a trusted and steady presence in an industry that never stands still.



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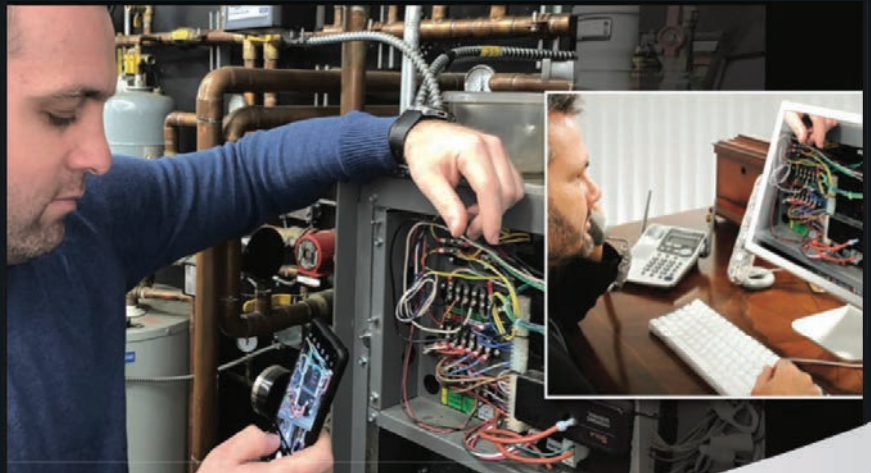


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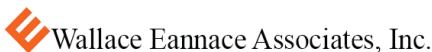
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FEBRUARY MEMBERSHIP MEETING

PRESENTATION BY THE DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS

On Tuesday, February 10th 2026, representatives from the Department of Buildings attended and presented at our Membership Meeting. The Master Plumbers Council would like to sincerely thank all the representatives who attended, and for working so closely with the MPC on industry updates. The presentation shared on LL152 was very informative; our members found the session extremely engaging and greatly appreciated the opportunity to ask questions.

There have been key revisions to Rule 1 RCNY §103-10. Effective as of January 3, 2026, a 48-hour notice is required for all LL152 inspections.

Local Law 142 of 2025 was enacted on October 25th, 2025, and becomes effective 120 days later (February 22nd, 2026). Any buildings with gas commercial spaces need to be inspected. Dwelling units are exempt except for POE that are within the dwelling unit. Inspectors working under the direct employ of an LMP must hold a journeyman plumber registration/successful completion of the training program. A worker wallet card is proof of the 7-hour Periodic Gas Piping Inspection training course.

DOB has answers to the many questions that members asked regarding LL152, including the following:

- If a POE is in the cellar with gas meters in each tenant dwelling units, the individual meters do not need to be inspected.
- If an owner of a 1&2 Family who is on the LL152 excel list failed to do their inspection, and has a CofO for a 1&2 Family, they would be able to receive a waiver due to misclassification, and would have to submit before March 31st of 2026 for the 2025 cycle. Violations up to 3-Family dwellings have not been issued.
- Waivers can be done for empty lots with no buildings or gas, providing that you upload a Utility letter stating that there is no gas service.
- For a 2024 Periodic Gas Piping Inspection violation, you can perform an out-of-cycle inspection and pay the violation, in order to have the violation dismissed.
- If there is a mistake or error you made on a GPS2 form, and you are trying to get the violation waived, it may be best for you to email DOB at ll152of16@buildings.nyc.gov with all the information and ask them for consideration. These will be handled on a case-by-case basis.
- When a GPS2 is submitted for Cycle 2, Notices of Deficiencies will be removed. The DOB is currently working on completing this.
- When the DOB made an error in issuing a violation for a filing that was legitimately done, you must do a challenge, and you only have 30 days to do so.
- Waivers can be used for buildings with no gas or misclassified buildings. There is no time limit to requesting a waiver.
- There are no additional fines or consequences for not paying a LL152 violation. The amount of money on the violation will remain on account until it has been paid.
- If a building has one address with one building, but has multiple Bin numbers, you must file reports for each Bin number. Each Bin number needs a separate report.
- It is possible the owner can request to have these Bin numbers removed, so that future inspections are not needed for these Bins. The process must be done by updating the city planning records to remove the unnecessary Bin numbers and will likely need a design professional to do so.

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To be successful in your business, you need important and timely insights on building codes, technological changes, workplace laws and regulations, and much more - all of which the MPC provides for its members. MPC members are made aware of industry changes and issues as they are happening, allowing for members to have the time and knowledge to make the proper adjustments, so that business can continue to run smoothly.

Member Types

- Master Plumber Member
- Master Associate Member (sub-member)
- Employee Co-Member (sub-member)
- Industry Affiliate Member
- Professional Member

Member Benefits:

Committees to Answer your Questions:

MPC Members has access to contact all association committees for a plethora of resources. These committees are comprised of hardworking member volunteers, who are experts in their given areas.

Network of Fellow Industry Professionals:

Join a network of fellow industry professionals who all have the same goal, to be successful and to promote our industry. Many of our board and committee members have built outstanding relationships with various key persons at city agencies.

Up to the Minute Industry Updates:

MPC offers outstanding resources to members that keeps them up to date on everything related to our industry, such as informative monthly membership meetings and daily emails with the latest industry updates.

Access to Training Resources:

Take one of many training courses at MPC's very own Robert John Daly Memorial Training Center, which opened in 2019. Courses include backflow courses (certification & re-certification), operator qualification courses, gas appliance courses, and more!

Your Voice is Heard:

Various city agencies connect with the MPC and its committees regularly to discuss issues that are important to the plumbing industry. Members are consistently asked to send their questions so that they can be brought to the appropriate party for answers, and MPC's lobbyist works diligently to provide us with the opportunity to have a meaningful dialogue with the appropriate entities that regulate our industry.

These benefits only scratch the surface of what MPC does to support its members and their businesses.

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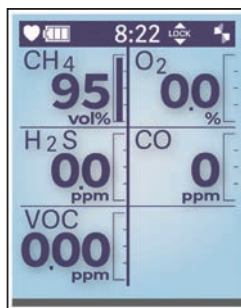
Leak Surveys of Gas Piping Inside Buildings



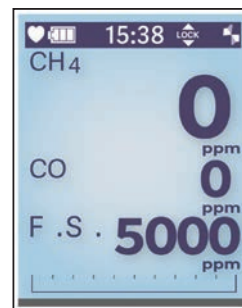
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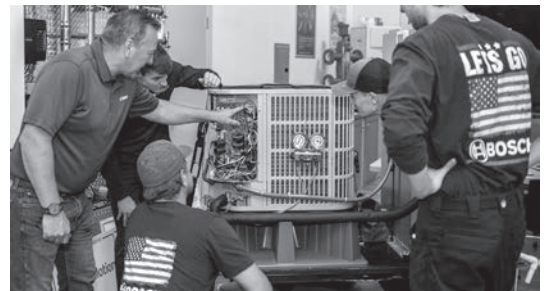
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